

South Carolina set a goal to create a replicable plan with intense evaluation and feedback to be used statewide. Since the initiation of abstinence education in South Carolina, 9 years ago, South Carolina teen pregnancy rates have been reduced by 35 percent, falling from 53 (per 1,000) in 1996 to 34.3 in 2005 among 15- to 17-year-olds.

Parents nationwide prefer abstinence education over so-called "comprehensive" sex education by a 2 to 1 margin, regardless of political or religious affiliation, according to a recent Zogby poll. Abstinence education is defined by its exclusive purpose of teaching the social, psychological and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity until marriage. Abstinence education permits an age-appropriate discussion of contraception, but within the context of promoting abstinence as the healthiest choice.

I am concerned that the program as reauthorized in the SCHIP bill contains new requirements for medical accuracy and proven effectiveness. These new requirements apply only to abstinence education. Placing accountability on all adolescent health programs funded by the Federal Government is an appropriate standard for the spending of Federal tax-dollars and the protection of children's health. These funds must be based on health outcomes and equally applied to all federally funded adolescent health programs.

Reauthorization of the Title V Abstinence Education Program and funding is critical in supporting the majority of communities who wish to promote the optimal health message for our Nation's youth. Title V Abstinence Education is working in South Carolina, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting a reauthorization of the program as it was originally designed.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WEATHER MITIGATION RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Weather Mitigation Research and Technology Transfer Authorization Act. This bill will increase and enhance research and development in weather mitigation to better understand its effectiveness in addressing drought in our country.

The western part of our country, including my own State of Colorado, has experienced drought conditions in recent years. Efforts have been made to address drought recovery, preparedness, and alleviation. Weather mitigation, which means the use of artificial methods to change or control the natural formation of cloud forms or precipitation forms, causing, for example, snowpack augmentation or rain enhancement, could also contribute to solving this problem. However, little fundamental research has been done to better understand weather mitigation and modification.

The National Academies of Science report Critical Issues in Weather Modification Research, released in 2003, noted that there is no scientific proof that weather modification or mitigation is effective; however, the report at-

tributes this to a lack of understanding of "critical atmospheric processes" that have caused unpredictable results with weather mitigation, not a lack of success with such efforts. The report called for a national program for a sustained research effort in weather modification and mitigation research to enhance the effectiveness and predictability of weather mitigation.

There is currently no federal investment in weather mitigation, though there are private funds that are largely going toward unproven techniques. My bill, similar to a bill introduced in the Senate by Senator KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, establishes a federal research and development effort to improve our understanding of the atmosphere and develop more effective weather modification technologies and techniques.

In my own State, the Denver Water Department, which has been impacted by the prolonged drought conditions, implemented a cloud seeding program to help increase the snowpack in its watersheds along the mountains of the Front Range. This was not a major program, but it was an attempt to modify the drought conditions for the benefit of the over 2.5 million people in the Denver area that are served by Denver Water. This bill would help augment these types of efforts by promoting greater research into how best to employ such techniques in a safe and effective manner.

Specifically, the bill creates a Weather Mitigation Advisory and Research Board in the Department of Commerce to promote the "theoretical and practical knowledge of weather mitigation" through the funding of research and development projects. The board will be made up of representatives from the American Meteorological Society, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Center for Atmospheric Research, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a higher education institution, and a state which is currently supporting operational weather modification projects.

In Colorado, a large portion of our water source comes from the snowpack runoff each year. A better understanding of weather mitigations has the potential to enhance our snowpacks, and thus assist in addressing drought concerns.

But the needs for this research extend beyond the western United States. The need for this research is becoming even more urgent with the reports that other countries are successfully exploring this area of research. China in particular has focused on the possibility that weather mitigation technology would allow the government to control the weather during the Beijing Olympics in 2008. The Chinese already spend more than \$50 million annually on weather mitigation. As the weather conditions in China can have an impact on North American weather as well, we must understand how these changes will change our weather. This is quickly becoming an issue of national and economic security.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the expansion of the research and development of weather mitigation and urge a swift passage of this bill.

BLUE DIAMOND GROWERS

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, on behalf of Representative KEVIN MCCARTHY and myself, I would like to address remarks that were made on the House floor concerning a grower owned nonprofit marketing cooperative in our districts.

Yesterday, during debate related to the 2008 Agriculture Appropriations bill, inaccurate information was conveyed that undermined the integrity of Blue Diamond Growers. I take this opportunity to provide clarifying facts to my colleagues.

Blue Diamond is approaching its 100th anniversary as a nonprofit marketing cooperative for thousands of growers in California. Many of the grower members live in my district, and produce the world's best almonds. Blue Diamond is very proud of the fact that the average tenure of its employees is approximately twenty years. This is an outstanding record and demonstrates employee satisfaction with their jobs.

The International Longshoreman and Warehouseman's Union has tried to organize Blue Diamond since the late 1980s. They have had no success. Diamond's employees do not want to be in the union and express high job satisfaction. In 1990, the ILWU held an election at Blue Diamond and lost. As recently as May of 2005, Blue Diamond asked the NLRB to hold an election so that Blue Diamond's employees would have the opportunity to vote on whether or not they wished to be members of the ILWU. The ILWU immediately filed a letter with the NLRB stating that they had no interest in representing Blue Diamond workers. Therefore, the election was cancelled. Blue Diamond is ready and willing to hold an election, supervised by the NLRB, at any time the employees want it.

Since that time, the ILWU has filed numerous complaints with the NLRB. The original complaints have been resolved to the satisfaction of the NLRB. They covered three employee terminations. It is my understanding that the employees were fired for actions endangering their own personal safety or threatening food quality. However, the NLRB found that two of the firings were improper and those employees were re-hired and given all of their back pay and benefits. The NLRB found the third firing to be proper.

In what appears to be an ongoing harassment action against Blue Diamond Growers, the ILWU filed three additional complaints over the firing of employees. The NLRB held all of these firings to be proper, and found in favor of Blue Diamond.

Madam Speaker, it is important to have the record clear on this matter, since Blue Diamond Growers treats its employees fairly in all respects. This is clearly demonstrated by the length of employment of most of the employees. I hope that in the future, Representatives concerned about the rights of workers in our districts would more fully examine the facts before making unfounded claims on the House Floor. Blue Diamond Growers and the thousands of farmers and workers who they represent deserve better from this House.